



Christopher Columbus High School

Lisa Fuentes, Principal 925 Astor Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. 10469

Dear New York City Council Members:

I am writing to support your proposed legislation outlawing aluminum bats from high school competition in New York City. I am currently the varsity baseball coach at Christopher Columbus High School, and am the former head coach of the Adlai Stevenson varsity team. From my first hand perspective, there is no doubt in my mind that players would be substantially safer playing in a wood bat league.

As a pitcher in college, I lived through the transition from wood to aluminum, and I know from personal experience that aluminum bats allow batters to hit the ball harder. For me, from their inception, aluminum bats have always created an undue danger for pitchers. This is because, on a hard hit ball, a pitcher is the fielder with the least time to react.

Aluminum bats decrease the time a pitcher has to react. A fraction of a second can mean the difference between a line drive that is caught, and one that hits a pitcher in his face because he cannot react fast enough to it. Now there is scientific evidence to back up what was before just a "gut feeling."

According to the American Journal of Sports Medicine, the greatest number of catastrophic injuries in high school and college baseball are caused by pitchers being hit by batted balls.¹ The Sporting News notes that, "the fastest batted ball a pitcher can defend against is about 97 mph."² This is troubling when you consider that:

A 2002 study by Brown University said balls hit off an aluminum bat averaged 93.3 mph, compared to 86.1 mph for wooden bats, and found 2 percent of balls hit off wooden bats exceeded 100 mph, compared to 37 percent hit off metal bats.³

That means that with aluminum bats, the ball is hit harder than a pitcher can react 37% of the time. Wood bats produce this dangerous result only 2% of the time.⁴

¹ Barry P. Boden, et. al., *Catastrophic Injuries in High School and College Baseball Players*, The American Journal of Sports Medicine, July 1, 2004.

² Armen Keteyian, *Bats should crack, not skulls*, The Sporting News, June 24, 2002.

³ CBS/AP, *New Jersey Lawmakers Consider Banning Metal Bats*, October 19, 2006.

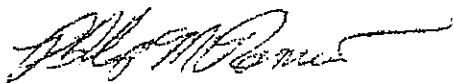
⁴ See also, Daniel A. Russell, *Physics and Acoustics of Baseball & Softball Bats: Why Aluminum Bats Can Perform Better than Wood Bats*, Kettering University, 2003.

There are pitchers in our league who throw with the velocity of major leaguers, sometimes topping 90mph. Aluminum bats magnify the power of hitters in our league, and it is a league full of exceptional hitters. The problem is, these are high school fielders, not major leaguers – yet they are being asked to field balls hit every bit as hard. Aluminum bats create a needless danger in a league flush with good hitters.

The aluminum bats hurt hitters too, by the way, because many players have trouble with the transition from aluminum to wood when they make the jump to professional baseball. If we want to produce future major leaguers, it makes more sense to use wood bats anyway.

For the safety of the pitchers and other players in our league, I urge the City Council to pass its proposed legislation banning aluminum bats from competition in our schools.

Sincerely Yours,

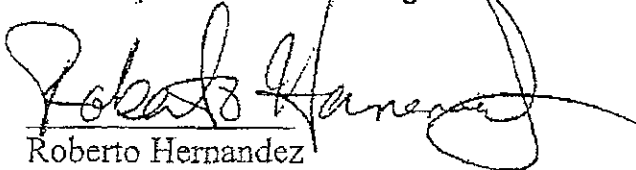


Philip Romero
Head Coach, Varsity Baseball
Christopher Columbus High School

I concur with the conclusion of our coach that using wood bats in PSAL competition would be safer for the students in our charge.



Lisa Fuentes
Principal
Christopher Columbus High School



Roberto Hernandez
Assistant Principal, Organization
Christopher Columbus High School

Victor M. Arroyo
 Victor Arroyo
 Athletic Director
 Christopher Columbus H.S.

Greg Zeitlin
 Greg Zeitlin
 Assistant Coach
 Christopher Columbus H.S.

Victor Lopez	Pitcher, 1B.
Rafael Frias	Pitcher, 2B, RF
Randy Rodriguez	CF, 1B
Jason Rivera	1B, P
Carl Ciavatta	2B, SS
Francis Smith	1B, 2B
<u>Richard Thomas</u>	
Germán Delacruz	2B
James Smith	RF
Ignacio Ortiz	1B, OF
Joseph McNally	IF, OF
Mike Rodriguez	OF.
Jim Farnham	
Samuel S. S. S. S.	CF
Jimmy Tabon	CF, P
Nicholas Rodriguez	OF
Ornela Salazar	OF, IF
Edurne Ramos	UT, L
Kedy Espinal	Catcher
	SS